



# JAMES GILES

AGE: 17 years old FROM: England

TOP FIVE CHARACTER VALUES: LEADERSHIP | COURAGE | COMMUNITY AWARENESS | CONFIDENCE | SOCIAL JUSTICE

*“You get a great feeling doing something good for the community which gives me the courage to continue what I do.”*

Taught from a young age that you should help others, having a younger sibling with learning difficulties means I have always done this at home.

Starting a student newsletter at my school when I was seven was my first venture into taking part in social action. Following this I was proud to raise £400 for Barnardo's, on behalf of my local Post Office branch, the highest amount raised by any branch in the South East.

Continuing to run a student newsletter at secondary school I expanded this into a local news website, the Kingston Enquirer, to engage the community. When the Post Office announced job cuts I campaigned to change this working with my community, especially the elderly who rely on the Post Office for their pensions and for whom this may be their only interaction with people in a day. I also liaised with MPs including former postal minister Edward Davey MP and succeeded as only one full-time post was cut instead of four.

You get a great feeling doing something good for the community which gives me the courage to continue what I do. I have done lots of further social action including: growing my student newspaper which has on occasions been received by over 5,000 households; influencing Kingston Council to livestream all their meetings for local residents; organising many political events including the largest hustings for the past two General Elections; becoming an ambassador for Love Kingston having raised £1,000 for them to help vulnerable young people in my community; and extensive campaign work, notably a campaign to save the roundabout regarded as our 'distinct gateway landmark', receiving coverage on BBC News and ultimately overturning the plan to scrap the roundabout – a huge win for Kingston and the environment.

At school I increased youth voice as School Council representative, Environment Ambassador and Head Boy.

